

Launch Minnesota Education Grants Request for Proposals

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated 12/16/2019

How far along in the planning does the project need to be apply for grant?

This is not intended to be a planning grant. The expectation is that awardees will be able to begin using the funds to implement the project within a reasonable time frame upon execution of a grant agreement.

What is the appropriate organization to use for our Lead Applicant?

The lead applicant must also act as the fiscal agent for the grant and have the capacity and expertise to receive funds, make payments, monitor project expenditures, and manage the overall project.

When are grant funds disbursed?

Grant funds are disbursed on a reimbursement basis and no payment will be made until a grant agreement is fully executed between DEED and the grantee.

Is the minimum match requirement?

Yes. One-to-one matching requirements. Cash is preferred, in-kind is allowed. Proposals will be evaluated and scored, in part, based on the proposals demonstration of leveraging state funds for maximum impact.

Can federal funds be used as match?

Yes.

Can state funds be used as match?

No. Any other state funds used as a part of this project must be identified. It does not count as match.

Can matching funds be expended before an award and executed grant agreement?

No. Matching funds must be expended after the execution of a grant agreement. All project expenses that happen before a grant agreement is executed cannot be counted as match or

Are the business clients required to provide match?

No. The intent of this program is that the source of matching funds are private, local, or federal funds.

The checklist lists a Cover Sheet. Is there a specific form we are to fill out or do we just create a sheet with the requested information?

No. Coversheets can be of your organization's own design. At minimum please include organization name, project title, total request, total match and a lead contact.

The checklist lists a UI Form. Where can this be found?

This has been posted on the site where the RFP is available.

Our organization receives state funding from other sources for this project or similar projects. Are we still eligible to apply for and receives these funds?

Yes. However in your application identify any other state funding sources being used for this project or that your organization receives. Should your proposal be awarded a grant it may affect the final amount of the award to be determined at the discretion of the Commissioner of DEED.

Will there be another round of funding and can previous awardees apply?

Yes. Another round of funding will open for applications in fall 2020 for awards in early 2021. Previous awardees are eligible to apply.

Are private higher education institutions eligible for funding?

Yes.

Our organization is seeking to be a partner organization for multiple responders to the RFP. Is this allowed?

Organizations are discouraged from partner with multiple respondents to the RFP. In addition respondents to the RFP have to abide by the anti-collusion rules of the RFP.

How does DEED define "Collusion" when it comes to submitting a proposal.

The proposals has been submitted to DEED without collusion with and without any agreement, understanding or planned common course of action with, any other Responder of materials, supplies, equipment, or services described in the Request for Proposals, designed to limit fair and open competition.

That the contents of the proposal have not been communicated by the Responder or its employees or agents to any person not identified as a programmatic or financial partner in the project.

Is there a target age demographic for populations served by the grant? Can a project focused on high school aged entrepreneurs be funded through this program?

There is nothing specific in the RFP regarding targeted age. High school age entrepreneur specific programs are eligible to participate. However this program is not intended to specifically target high school age entrepreneurs.

Are grants focused solely on high-tech startups or is this just a component of who is served?

Grants are focused solely on high-tech startups.

Do grants need to be used for all 4 or just 1 of the following: Commercialization, Risk Capital, Statewide Collaborations, and Networking

The most competitive proposals will address some aspect of all four.

What does DEED include in the definition of “administrative costs” since it is limited to 10% of the grant.

Expenses not directly related to delivering grant objectives but necessary to support this grant funded program can include administrative cost. Administrative cost may include a portion of the following expenses: accounting, human resources, IT support, other general office expenses, executive or supervisory salaries and fringe, rent, facilities maintenance costs, utilities, Fleet vehicles, etc.

Can applicants apply again in year 2 of the program?

Applicants can apply again for year 2 regardless of whether or not they applied for and/or received an award in year 1.

Can different institutions that are part of the same higher education system such as Minnesota State or the University of Minnesota apply for the program or should a higher education system submit one proposal?

We can accept separate proposals from separation institutions within the same system. Each proposal will be evaluated on its own merits.

What is meant by “other State of Minnesota” funds and how does that relate to matching funds for applicants that are part of the University of Minnesota and Minnesota State system?

State of Minnesota funds means legislatively appropriated state funds. These funds cannot be counted towards the matching requirements of this program. We would accept non-legislative appropriated funds such as federal sources of funding or private sources as match towards this grant.

Can we seek matching funds from other funding sources within a higher-education system itself or affiliated entities?

Yes, but only those sources that did not originate from legislatively appropriated state funds would be counted as meeting the matching requirements of this program.

Is it appropriate to include state-reimbursement for some existing costs or is it only appropriate to request dollars for net-new programs, distribution, support, technology, etc.

Ongoing cost from an existing program that occur after a grant agreement has been executed are eligible if it is directly related to the implementation of the proposed project however the most competitive proposals will be those that propose “net-new” activities or expand the capacity of existing programs.